



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 5932

January Session, 2005

* HB05932GAE__051105__ *

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR MUNICIPAL ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2006*) For the purposes of
2 sections 2 to 5, inclusive, of this act:

3 (1) "Council" means the Connecticut Animal Control Officer
4 Standards Training Council established pursuant to section 2 of this
5 act;

6 (2) "Animal control officer" includes a regional animal control
7 officer, assistant regional animal control officer and municipal animal
8 control officer, as defined in section 22-327 of the general statutes, and
9 an assistant municipal animal control officer.

10 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2006*) (a) There is established a
11 Connecticut Animal Control Officer Standards Training Council for
12 the purpose of establishing a program and procedures, within
13 available appropriations, for the training, examination and certification
14 of animal control officers.

15 (b) The council shall consist of seven members, one of whom shall
16 be an employee of the Department of Agriculture, appointed by the
17 Commissioner of Agriculture; one of whom shall be from the

18 Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, appointed by the
19 conference; one of whom shall be from the Council of Small Towns,
20 appointed by the council; one of whom shall be a member of the
21 Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, appointed by the president of
22 the association; and three of whom shall be municipal animal control
23 officers, appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture. The council
24 members shall serve without pay and shall be appointed initially as
25 follows: Two members for one-year terms; two members for two-year
26 terms and three members for three-year terms. The commissioner shall
27 initially determine the term of each member, and thereafter two
28 council members shall be appointed every two years for three-year
29 terms.

30 (c) The council shall elect a chairperson from among the members
31 and shall develop rules of procedure. The council shall meet at such
32 times as the chairperson deems necessary. Special meetings shall be
33 held at the request of a majority of the council.

34 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2006*) (a) The council shall develop
35 a training program, within available appropriations, for certification of
36 animal control officers. The program shall consist of not less than forty
37 hours of training including, but not limited to: (1) State and federal law
38 of arrest, search and seizure; (2) state law relating to animals; (3) the
39 basics of investigation; (4) report writing and record keeping; (5)
40 shelter or pound standards; (6) disease recognition; (7) euthanasia
41 policy; (8) ethics and professionalism in dealing with the public; (9)
42 cruelty and neglect investigations, including, but not limited to, blood
43 sports and cults; (10) animal bite and vicious animal investigations;
44 (11) officer safety and loss prevention; (12) animal care, identification,
45 behavior, handling and capture and restraint techniques; (13) overview
46 of the legal system, court structure and terminology; (14) warrants; (15)
47 civil liability issues; and (16) for animal control officers employed by
48 municipalities that permit officers to carry firearms, weapons training.

49 (b) The council shall develop a program, within available
50 appropriations, for review training consisting of at least twenty-four

51 hours of instruction on subjects including, but not limited to: Animal
52 cruelty investigations, search and seizure, animal handling and the
53 state law relating to animals.

54 (c) The council shall develop an examination, within available
55 appropriations, designed to test proficiency in the subjects covered by
56 the training program developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this
57 section. The examination may be written, oral, practical or a
58 combination thereof.

59 (d) The council may approve, reject or revoke approval of, any
60 animal control officer training courses including, but not limited to,
61 courses provided by the National Animal Control Association,
62 American Humane Association or the Humane Society of the United
63 States, for inclusion in the training programs developed pursuant to
64 this section.

65 (e) The council may, from time to time, amend or alter the training
66 programs and the examination it develops pursuant to this section.

67 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2006*) (a) Each person appointed as
68 an animal control officer shall be certified by the Commissioner of
69 Agriculture and maintain certification in good standing pursuant to
70 this section by the later of six months from (1) the date that the council
71 develops its initial training program and examination, or (2) the date
72 that the officer is appointed or reappointed. The provisions of section
73 7-294d of the general statutes shall not apply to animal control officers
74 appointed pursuant to section 22-328, 22-331 or 22-331a of the general
75 statutes.

76 (b) No person shall serve as an animal control officer unless such
77 person is certified by the council pursuant to section 3 of this act. The
78 commissioner shall waive the requirement of satisfactory completion
79 of the training requirements for candidates who have served as animal
80 control officers in the state for a period of five years since July 1, 1991,
81 and for candidates who demonstrate that they have training and
82 experience that is substantially the equivalent of the course. The

83 commissioner may not waive the requirement that candidates
84 successfully pass the examination developed by the council pursuant
85 to section 3 of this act.

86 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of sections 1 to 5, inclusive,
87 of this act, the commissioner may decline to issue a certificate if (1) the
88 applicant falsified any document in order to obtain or renew the
89 certificate, (2) the applicant has been convicted of a felony, (3) the
90 applicant has been found not guilty of a felony by reason of mental
91 disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13 of the general statutes, (4)
92 the applicant has been convicted of a violation of subsection (c) of
93 section 21a-279 of the general statutes or section 29-9 of the general
94 statutes, or (5) the applicant has been refused issuance of a certificate
95 or similar authorization or has had a certificate or other similar
96 authorization canceled or revoked by another jurisdiction on grounds
97 that would authorize cancellation or revocation under the provisions
98 of this subsection.

99 (d) Each animal control officer shall satisfactorily complete the
100 council's review training every three years in order to maintain
101 certification unless the commissioner, for good cause, grants the officer
102 additional time, not to exceed one year, to complete the training.

103 (e) The commissioner may revoke any certificate if (1) the certificate
104 was issued by administrative error, (2) the certificate was obtained
105 through misrepresentation or fraud, (3) the holder falsified any
106 document in order to obtain or renew any certificate, (4) the holder has
107 been convicted of a felony, (5) the holder has been found not guilty of a
108 felony by reason of mental disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13
109 of the general statutes, (6) the holder has been convicted of a violation
110 of subsection (c) of section 21a-279 of the general statutes or section
111 29-9 of the general statutes, or (7) the holder has been refused issuance
112 of a certificate or similar authorization or has had the certificate or
113 other authorization canceled or revoked by another jurisdiction on
114 grounds that would authorize cancellation or revocation under the
115 provisions of this subsection. Whenever the commissioner believes

116 there is a reasonable basis for cancellation or revocation of the
 117 certificate of an animal control officer, the commissioner shall give the
 118 holder of the certificate notice and an opportunity for a hearing, in
 119 accordance with the provisions of section 4-182 of the general statutes.
 120 Any officer whose certification is revoked pursuant to this section may
 121 reapply for certification no sooner than two years after the date on
 122 which the revocation order becomes final.

123 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2006*) (a) Animal control officer
 124 certification shall expire (1) if the officer fails to satisfactorily complete
 125 review training in accordance with sections 3 and 4 of this act, or (2)
 126 after two years if the person has not been employed as a municipal
 127 animal control officer during that period, unless such officer has been
 128 on leave of absence.

129 (b) Upon reemployment as an animal control officer, such officer
 130 shall apply for certification in a manner provided by sections 3 and 4 of
 131 this act.

132 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2006*) The Commissioner of
 133 Agriculture may develop regulations, in accordance with the
 134 provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the
 135 provisions of sections 1 to 5, inclusive of this act, including, but not
 136 limited to, establishing procedures for applying for certification as an
 137 animal control officer.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>January 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 2 | <i>January 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 3 | <i>January 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 4 | <i>January 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 5 | <i>January 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 6 | <i>January 1, 2006</i> | New section |

PD Joint Favorable Subst.

GAE *Joint Favorable*